

The delightful exultations of Indira Ekadasi are described in the Brahma-vaivarta Purana in the conversation between Sri Krsna and Maharaja Yudhisthira. Maharaja Yudhisthira enquired: "O Krsna! O Madhusudana! O Killer of the demon Madhu! What is the name of the Ekadasi that occurs during the waning moon in the month of Asvina (September/October), what is the process for following this sublime vrata (vow), and what merit is obtained by observing it?"

Lord Krsna replied, "The name of this sacred and clement Ekadasi is Indira Ekadasi. By Observing this Ekadasi the sinful reactions of all one's forbearers as well as one's own sinful reactions are entirely eradicated.

"O King! There was once a regal and prosperous king named Indrasena, who lived in Satya-Yuga. He was very expert in subduing his enemies and ruled his kingdom with great compassion. Surrounded by his children and grandchildren, he lived happily in his city of Mahismatipuri. He was always attached to the devotional service of Lord Visnu. Being a devotee constantly absorbed in cultivating and distributing spiritual knowledge, the king spent his time chanting the holy names of Sri Govinda, the bestower of liberation.

"One day as the King was happily sitting on his royal throne, Sri Narada Muni suddenly appeared before him from the sky. Upon seeing the sage Narada, King Indrasena rose up with folded palms and offered his respectful obeisances unto him. The King then duly worshipped Narada Muni with sixteen ingredients. Once the sage was happily seated, he asked Indrasena, "O great King is everyone happy and prosperous in your kingdom? Is your mind fixed in religious principles, and are you engaged in devotional service to Visnu?"

"The King replied, O best of sages! Everything is well and auspicious by your kind mercy. Today my life has become successful by your darsana and my performance of sacrifices has born fruit. O sage among the demigods! Please tell me the cause of your blessed visit."

"After hearing these humble words of the King, Narada Muni said: 'O lion-like King! Now hear about a wonderfully fortunate incident that took place, prior to my arrival. O best of Kings! Once I went to the abode of Yamaraja from the abode of Lord Brahma, Yamaraja greeted me respectfully and worshipped me with great pomp and fervour. After being comfortably seated, I offered prayers to the pious and truthful Yamaraja. Then I saw your greatly pious father in the assembly of Yamaraja. As a result of breaking a vow, your father had to go there. O King! He gave me a message and requested me to convey it unto you. He said, 'Indrasena, the king of Mahismatipuri, is my son. O Lord, please tell him that due to some sinful activities committed in my previous life I am now living in the abode of the Lord of death! Yamaraja! Therefore, in order to free me from my fate, he should observe the vow of Ekadasi known as Indira Ekadasi, and give away it's piety to me. Then I will be released from my present condition of life.' Narada Muni continued, 'O King This is your father's request, in order to deliver your father to the spiritual world, you should observe the vow of Indira Ekadasi.'

"King Indrasena said: 'O sage amongst the demigods, kindly explain to me the procedure for following this Indira Ekadasi.' Narada Muni replied: "On the day before Ekadasi one should take bath early in the morning and with

faith and enthusiasm offer oblations to the forfathers, for their satisfaction. On that day one should eat only once and sleep on the floor at night. On the day of Ekadasi one should rise early in the morning, brush his teeth, wash his hands and mouth and take bath. Thereafter he should take a vow to not indulge in any material enjoyment and thus observe a total fast. He should also pray to the Lord, saying 'O lotus-eyed one, I take shelter of you.'

"Thereafter he should feed the brahmanas with sumptuous prasadam and give them daksina. At the end one should give the prasadi remnants to the cows. During the day one should worship Lord Hrsikesa by offering sandalwood paste, flowers, incense, lamp and foodstuffs with devotion. One should remain awake throughout the night while chanting, hearing and remembering the names, forms, qualities and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should then breakfast at the appropriate time by eating along with his brothers, children, grandchildren and relatives while maintaining silence. O King! If you follow this Ekadasi as I have just described, then your father will certainly attain the abode of Visnu.' After speaking in this way, Narada Muni, took his leave and departed.

"As per the instructions of Narada Muni, King Indrasena strictly observed this Ekadasi accompanied by his children, servants and others. As a result of observing this Ekadasi, flowers showered from the sky and the father of King Indrasena immediately rode on the back of Garuda to abode of Lord Visnu. Then the saintly King Indrasena ruled his kingdom without any impediment, and at the end of his life he entrusted the kingdom to his son and personally returned to the spiritual world. Such are the unsurmountable glories of Indira Ekadasi. Anyone who reads or hears the narration for this Ekadasi becomes free from all sinful reactions and ultimately returns to the abode of Visnu."